

March column for La Jolla Village News
By Council President Scott Peters, First District

Keeping La Jolla Safe and Clean

San Diego's quality of life is about more than just sunny weather. It's about keeping our communities clean and safe for the families who live there, whether on Challenger or Wall Street. The city council must not lose its focus on day-to-day neighborhood issues such as traffic, public safety and the environment.

Congestion along La Jolla Village Drive is a source of frustration for thousands of residents and commuters. One of my primary goals as councilman has been to improve traffic circulation along this very busy stretch of road, especially between Interstate 5 and UCSD.

I'm happy to say that the project is now complete. On February 15, the mayor and I were joined by representatives of the community to celebrate the end of the long-awaited road widening. Additional traffic lanes, new sidewalks and bike lanes, as well as improvements to the Gilman Drive bridge will provide much-needed relief for commuters.

This is just one of several road improvement projects underway right now in the area. Infrastructure improvements have historically lagged behind new development. I'm pleased that our community is finally catching up.

I'm also pleased to announce a new initiative that aims to keep our community clean and safe. Councilman Jim Madaffer and I have introduced an ordinance that would prohibit smoking at all beaches and parks within the city limits, including La Jolla Shores, Kate Sessions park and the many neighborhood parks in La Jolla. It's unfortunate that we need to pass another law to address something that seems like common sense, but the risk to our wildlife and open space is too great. Unattended cigarettes are a serious fire hazard in our open space parks like Rose Canyon.

Cigarette butts are also a major source of litter. My office sponsors a coastal cleanup project every year, and the number one type of litter we find is cigarette butts. Discarded cigarettes make up as much as 40% of the trash found on local beaches. They're dirty and unsightly, but they also pose a hazard to our children and marine mammals which may ingest the synthetic filter fibers.

We hope the issue will come before the full council this summer, with plenty of opportunity for public comment. We're proud to have the support of numerous environmental, health and public safety agencies, as well as supporters of our local parks and beaches. I hope you'll support this important health and safety measure as well.

Another way you can help keep our community clean is by participating in the Kiwanis Club of La Jolla's community cleanup March 18. Beginning at 9am, the cleanup project

will remove dead brush, weeds and trash along the bike path that runs from Nautilus Street fire station to Bird Rock. Put on your work gloves and join the Kiwanis Club at 9am on the 18th at Starkey Park, at Draper Avenue and Gravilla Street.

My office is committed to helping you quickly resolve problems in your neighborhood. Chanelle Barry is our La Jolla representative. You can reach her at (619) 236-6611. I'd also encourage you to check out our newly redesigned webpage, www.sandiego.gov/cd1.